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Monitoring of the implementation of the Standard Rules on the Equalization of Opportunities for Persons with Disabilities

Note by the Secretary-General

1. At its forty-eighth session, the General Assembly adopted the Standard Rules on the Equalization of Opportunities for Persons with Disabilities, contained in the annex to its resolution 48/96. The 22 Standard Rules provide a framework to further implement the goals of "equality" and "full participation" of persons with disabilities in social life and development, as set forth in the World Programme of Action concerning Disabled Persons, adopted by the Assembly in its resolution 37/52.

2. Section IV, paragraph 2, of the Standard Rules stipulates that the rules should be monitored within the framework of the sessions of the Commission for Social Development. The appointment of a Special Rapporteur to monitor their implementation was also envisaged in that paragraph.

3. In 2009, the Secretary-General appointed Shuaib Chalklen (South Africa) Special Rapporteur on disability of the Commission for Social Development for the period from 2009 to 2011. In February 2010, Mr. Chalklen delivered an oral report to the Commission at its forty-eighth session, in keeping with Economic and Social Council resolution 2008/20, in which the Council requested the Special Rapporteur to submit an annual report to the Commission for Social Development.

4. The Special Rapporteur presented his annual report to the Commission for Social Development at its forty-ninth session in February 2011 (E/CN.5/2011/9).

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Report of the Special Rapporteur on disability of the Commission for Social Development on monitoring of the implementation of the Standard Rules on the Equalization of Opportunities for Persons with Disabilities

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I. Introduction

1. This is my second report to the Commission for Social Development, covering my activities pursuant to Economic and Social Council resolutions 2008/20 and 2011/27 and in accordance with the provisions set forth in section IV of the Standard Rules on the Equalization of Opportunities for Persons with Disabilities.[1]

2. I wish to express my appreciation to the Secretary-General and the Commission for Social Development for entrusting me with the important role of Special Rapporteur on disability.

3. I would like to extend my gratitude to all Governments that have supported my work during the current period and, in particular, the Governments of Finland, Norway and Sweden for their continuous support and generous contributions.

4. My sincere gratitude goes to the staff of the Department of Economic and Social Affairs of the Secretariat for their excellent support in assisting me to carry out my mandate throughout the current period.

5. I would also like to thank other United Nations agencies and civil society organizations for their cooperation and support.

II. Background

6. The international normative framework that guides my work consists of the World Programme of Action concerning Disabled Persons,[2] the Standard Rules on the Equalization of Opportunities for Persons with Disabilities, and the Convention on the Rights of Persons with Disabilities.[3]

7. In addition to this normative framework, a number of other relevant human rights and development instruments play an important role in defining the broad parameters of my work.

8. The Secretary-General, in his report to the General Assembly at its sixty-sixth session on the realization of the Millennium Development Goals and other internationally agreed development goals for persons with disabilities,[4] discussed the progress made thus far towards the integration of the disability perspective in development processes, but noted that the rights and concerns of persons with disabilities remained to be integrated into mainstream development processes. The report also highlighted opportunities to ensure the inclusion of disability in the global development agenda towards 2015 and beyond.

9. Two key publications that were released in 2011, the *World Report on Disability*, published by the World Health Organization (WHO) and the World Bank, and *Community-based Rehabilitation Guidelines*, published by WHO, both provide a reference for a better understanding of the situation of, and challenges faced by, persons with disabilities.

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[1] General Assembly resolution 48/96, annex.

[2] A/37/351/Add.1 and Corr.1, annex, sect. VIII, recommendation 1 (IV).

[3] General Assembly resolution 61/106, annex I.

[4] A/66/128.

10. The *World Report on Disability* estimates that the number of persons with disabilities in the world has increased and that the previous estimate of 10 per cent was revised upwards to 15 per cent, yielding a global figure of more than 1 billion persons with disabilities.

11. The combined population of the least developed countries is 800 million, which makes the number of persons with disabilities hard to ignore. The increased emphasis on inclusive development by all stakeholders makes it imperative that decision makers at all levels include persons with disabilities in their development initiatives.

III. Activities of the Special Rapporteur on disability

A. Monitoring of the implementation of the Standard Rules and synergy between other disability-specific instruments

12. Within my mandate, I continue my work in monitoring, promoting and implementing the Standard Rules on the Equalization of Opportunities for Persons with Disabilities in the context of the Convention on the Rights of Persons with Disabilities and other human rights and disability-specific instruments, having a positive impact on the development of national policies to further advance the equalization of opportunities for persons with disabilities and disability-inclusive development.

13. During the period covered by the present report, and in conjunction with my missions to attend a number of international conferences and events, such as the Norwegian Agency for Development Cooperation (NORAD) seminar in Oslo in February 2011, the meeting of the Commonwealth Secretariat in New Delhi in January 2011 and the fourth session of the Conference of States Parties to the Convention on the Rights of Persons with Disabilities in New York in September 2011, I met with representatives of the Governments of China, India, Norway, the Philippines, Spain, Sweden, Thailand and the United States of America, as well as representatives of civil society organizations. I discussed the status of implementation of the Standard Rules, the Convention on the Rights of Persons with Disabilities, and other disability-specific instruments.

14. In March 2011, I had consultations with senior officials of the Ministry of Foreign Affairs in Finland, where I also discussed my priorities in promoting the twin-track approach of equality and the empowerment of persons with disabilities and advancement of disability-inclusive international cooperation.

15. I am encouraged by the increase in the number of States that have ratified the Convention and its Optional Protocol. I commend the ongoing efforts by Member States and civil society to promote the rights of persons with disabilities in society and development, in line with the Convention.

16. These key findings of my missions and the information provided in the present report indicate that the Standard Rules, together with other disability-specific instruments, continue to provide practical guidance for Member States in equalizing opportunities for persons with disabilities in society and development.

17. Effective steps taken by a number of Member States in the current reporting period for the implementation of the Standard Rules and other disability-specific instruments include establishing national coordination mechanisms, promoting accessibility, rehabilitation, education and access to social protection, as well as promoting international cooperation.

B. Mainstreaming disability in development

1. Member States

18. The Economic and Social Council, in resolution 2011/27, requested that I promote the inclusion of persons with disabilities and the mainstreaming of disability issues in development programmes and strategies at the national, regional and international levels.

19. In conjunction with General Assembly resolution 65/186 and Economic and Social Council resolution 2011/27, it was requested that my mandate and its activities contribute to the proposed high-level meeting on disability and development to be held during the sixty-seventh session of the General Assembly and its preparation, taking account of the priorities of the international community in strengthening efforts to ensure accessibility for and inclusion of persons with disabilities in all aspects of development efforts.

20. In February 2011, the Norwegian Agency for Development Cooperation (NORAD), in cooperation with my office, organized a seminar in Oslo on mainstreaming persons with disabilities in development cooperation. More than 60 representatives of Governments, United Nations agencies, multilateral and national donors, and disabled people's organizations attended the seminar.

21. The purpose of the seminar was to identify continuing barriers to the inclusion of persons with disabilities in development cooperation, and to find possible solutions to the obstacles.

22. The seminar recommended that focal points be established in development aid agencies or ministries responsible for disability. The seminar also recommended that organizations of persons with disabilities be strengthened and included as partners in all aspects of development cooperation.

23. Some of the key barriers identified were the lack of awareness concerning the situation and needs of persons with disabilities, the unavailability of adequate statistics and indicators related to disability, and the absence of political will for change.

24. In its conclusions, the seminar also noted the lack of knowledge and experience in mainstreaming disability that could guide development agencies. The Australian Government's Agency for International Development (AusAID) was cited as an example of best practice in mainstreaming disability in development.

25. The Government of Norway also organized an international conference on humanitarian disasters and persons with disabilities in May 2011. The objective of the conference was to address the exclusion of persons with disabilities in disaster relief, and the lack of inclusion of persons with disabilities in disaster-preparedness initiatives.

26. I concur with the results of the conference that the following issues require urgent attention:

(a) Discriminatory attitudes result in the lack of inclusion of disability in emergency-related responses and recovery efforts;

(b) Emergency situations result in dramatic changes to the community, and reconstruction processes often create new barriers for persons with disabilities;

(c) Women and girls with disabilities should be protected from sexual abuse and violence during emergency situations;

(d) Disaggregated data on persons with disabilities should be collected;

(e) Organizations of persons with disabilities should be consulted in emergency management situations and during reconstruction processes.

2. United Nations system

27. The United Nations system has undertaken several initiatives and responded positively to the need for mainstreaming disability in the system's work and programmes.

28. The Department of Economic and Social Affairs of the Secretariat is the global focal point on disability in the United Nations system. The Department continued its work in supporting intergovernmental dialogues concerning disability through the General Assembly, the Economic and Social Council, the Commission for Social Development, and the Conference of States Parties to the Convention on the Rights of Persons with Disabilities.

29. In conjunction with supporting intergovernmental processes, the Department of Economic and Social Affairs provided forums for stakeholders to exchange new ideas and develop strategic partnerships in the field of disability. I participated in, or directly contributed to, some of the forums, ranging from HIV and AIDS prevalence and disability to the empowerment of persons with disabilities through sports, the rights of children and youth with disabilities, and educational and employment opportunities for women and girls with disabilities. I commend those forums and, in particular, the panel discussion on "Making education a reality for children with disabilities", organized by the Department in collaboration with the World Bank and WHO in July 2011, on the occasion of the high-level segment of the substantive session of the Economic and Social Council's annual ministerial review.

30. I also intend to collaborate with the Department of Economic and Social Affairs in its technical cooperation. For instance, in November 2010 and September 2011, the Department collaborated with its partners and conducted two successful capacity-building workshops, in Trinidad and Tobago and Croatia, respectively. Through the evolving new network in Africa on disability and the envisaged African Disability Forum, I look forward to working with the Department in contributing to the capacity-building of diverse stakeholders in Africa.

31. Within the United Nations system, I also wish to collaborate closely with the United Nations Inter-Agency Support Group on the Convention on the Rights of Persons with Disabilities in its effort to implement the United Nations Joint Strategy and World Programme of Action concerning Disabled Persons, which will provide

further support to the implementation of the Convention on the Rights of Persons with Disabilities at the country level.

32. In June 2011, I attended the 18th annual meeting of Special Procedures of the Human Rights Council in Geneva, attended by mandate holders, special representatives, independent experts and the Chairs of working groups. The meeting provided an opportunity to interact and network with other United Nations mandate holders to discuss how disability issues could be mainstreamed into their respective areas of responsibility.

33. The United Nations Development Programme (UNDP) and the United Nations Children's Fund (UNICEF) now have full-time staff as disability focal points in their organizations. The concerns of children with disabilities are receiving greater attention within UNICEF and UNDP.

34. UNDP, the Office of the United Nations High Commissioner for Human Rights (OHCHR), the Department of Economic and Social Affairs and UNICEF have been working towards the establishment of a multi-donor trust fund, a multi-agency trust fund that will support disability mainstreaming initiatives within the United Nations system.

35. In June 2011, I supported WHO and the World Bank in the official launch of the *World Report on Disability* in New York. The report is comprehensive in its overview of the state of disability in the world and highlights challenges for the future. The report was well received by the international community.

36. The *World Report on Disability* highlights some of the most common barriers to the inclusion of persons with disabilities, such as:

(a) Inadequate policies and standards for disability-inclusive society and development;

(b) Negative attitudes towards disability;

(c) Lack of provision of services and service delivery for persons with disabilities;

(d) Inadequate funding for disability-inclusive development;

(e) Lack of accessibility to the physical environment and information and communications technologies;

(f) Lack of consultation and involvement of persons with disabilities;

(g) Lack of statistical data and evidence-based research on disability.

37. In a meeting with the United Nations independent expert on the situation of human rights in Haiti, I provided comments on the expert's report on Haiti (A/HRC/17/42) and noted the lack of provision for the inclusion of persons with disabilities in the reconstruction process. I have discussed the report with others in the disability community with a view to having an impact on the reconstruction process in Haiti.

38. The United Nations system continues to respond positively to the needs of persons with disabilities and to the mandates emanating from the international normative framework on disability. However, more can be done, such as developing a monitoring mechanism within the United Nations system on issues such as

employment of persons with disabilities, accessibility of the United Nations, environment and accessibility of information, and the oversight of the inclusion of disability in the development programmes of the United Nations.

3. Development in Africa

39. I supported the African Union Commission for Social Development in convening its meeting in Harare from 7 to 9 September 2011 to discuss ways in which the African Rehabilitation Institute could be revived and strengthened.

40. The purpose of the meeting was to address the need to restructure the African Rehabilitation Institute in line with recent global developments in the field of disability. The Governing Board recommended that the Institute be renamed and that it become part of the African Union Commission for Social Development. In future, all States members of the African Union will be part of the Institute.

41. The meeting also decided to establish a Disability Advisory Board, and the secretariat of the African Decade of Persons with Disabilities and continental organizations of persons with disabilities will be part of it.

42. Such developments will lead to greater integration among the different organizations working in the area of disability, and to better coordination of activities.

43. In July 2011, I was invited to attend the XVI World Congress of the World Federation of the Deaf in Durban, South Africa, and to speak at the opening ceremony, along with the United Nations High Commissioner for Human Rights. I addressed the importance of the Convention on the Rights of Persons with Disabilities as a tool for advancing the rights of the deaf community globally, regionally, nationally and locally. I also emphasized the need for greater attention to be focused on the concerns of deaf Africans in areas where Africa lags behind in the development, recognition and education of the deaf. I was pleased to note that, in its resolution,[5] the Congress committed itself to building organizations of deaf persons in Africa and to assisting with the development of sign language in African countries.

44. In October 2011, Disabled Peoples' International held its eighth World Assembly in Durban, South Africa, under the theme: "Disability Movement United in creating a society for all through the United Nations Disability Convention and the Millennium Development Goals". I participated at the plenary session and drew attention to the urgent need for disability inclusion in all aspects of the Millennium Development Goals, as well as in other internationally agreed development goals, in the framework of the Convention on the Rights of Persons with Disabilities.

45. It is also encouraging to note that countries in Africa are responding to the Convention on the Rights of Persons with Disabilities. In a recent case in Zambia, the High Court was petitioned by organizations of persons with disabilities to address the inaccessibility of voting stations during elections. The Court ruled in favour of the organizations of persons with disabilities and stated that future elections should be made fully accessible to persons with disabilities.

[5] www.wfdeaf.org/news/congress-resolution.

C. Fostering disability-inclusive international cooperation

46. The Economic and Social Council, in resolution 2008/20, requested the Special Rapporteur on disability to act as a catalyst to promote international and technical cooperation on disability issues, including by identifying strategic areas for the exchange and sharing of expertise, best practices, knowledge, information and relevant technologies.

47. During the reporting period, I continued to promote and support efforts for disability-inclusive development cooperation, as one of my top priorities. For example, I actively participated as resource person and contributed to debates organized during the sixteenth session of the Human Rights Council and the fourth session of the Conference of States Parties to the Convention on the Rights of Persons with Disabilities, both focused on international cooperation and article 32 of the Convention on the Rights of Persons with Disabilities.

48. In March 2011, I attended the third annual interactive debate on the Convention on the Rights of Persons with Disabilities, held at the sixteenth session of the Human Rights Council. The theme of the meeting was article 32 of the Convention on the Rights of Persons with Disabilities, on which I presented a brief paper that focused on the need for data collection and cooperation in the field of scientific knowledge, as well as on the need for best practices in disability to be shared among Member States.

49. The Human Rights Council, in resolution 16/15[6] entitled "Role of international cooperation in support of national efforts for the realization of the rights of persons with disabilities", the Office of the United Nations High Commissioner for Human Rights to prepare a study on the participation of persons with disabilities in political and public life, in consultation with relevant stakeholders, including the Special Rapporteur on disability.

50. In mainstreaming disability into international cooperation, it is important to take cognizance of both mainstreaming disability in all international cooperation and having disability-specific cooperation, following a twin-track approach of equality and empowerment of persons with disabilities.

51. The annual Conference of States Parties to the Convention on the Rights of Persons with Disabilities has developed into a global forum for the exchange of experiences, learning and sharing good practices, and global networking. There were over 40 side events to the fourth session of the Conference of States Parties in September 2011. Those events generated great interest among all stakeholders on priority disability issues and provided a wealth of information and knowledge, from which I learned a great deal and on the basis of which I intend to strengthen my programmes and activities.

52. At the fourth session of the Conference of States Parties, I made a statement at the round table on international cooperation,[7] which emphasized the importance of dedicated focal points in development agencies, staffed by experienced senior personnel who would be responsible for the development and monitoring of indicators on disability-inclusive development. I also noted the lack of consultations

[6] See *Official Records of the General Assembly, Sixty-sixth Session, Supplement No. 53* (A/66/53), chap. I.

[7] www.un.org/disabilities/documents/COP/cosp4_presentation_chalklen_1.doc.

with organizations of persons with disabilities by both donor and recipient countries, which can lead to a lack of both awareness and knowledge of disability, causing disability to fall off of the priority list. The Convention on the Rights of Persons with Disabilities and the Standard Rules on the Equalization of Opportunities for Persons with Disabilities both emphasize the importance of consultation with disabled people's organizations.

53. I had the opportunity, in December 2010, to attend a meeting of the Commonwealth Secretariat in London, where I was invited to speak at their annual event on human rights. Subsequently, the Commonwealth Secretariat invited me to attend a meeting of the Commonwealth Forum of National Human Rights Institutions held in New Delhi in the following month. The meeting provided me with the opportunity to raise awareness of the Convention on the Rights of Persons with Disabilities and encourage technical cooperation among States members of the Commonwealth.

54. In March 2011, during my meeting with senior officials of the Ministry of Foreign Affairs of Finland in Helsinki, I discussed the twin-track approach of equality and the empowerment of persons with disabilities, and commended their continued support for disability and human rights-related activities globally.

55. The establishment of the United Nations Partnership to Promote the Rights of Persons with Disabilities: Multi-Donor Trust Fund should greatly enhance international cooperation in the field of disability. I am encouraged by the support the initiative has received from agencies within the United Nations system. I look forward to assisting the Fund, whose key role is in building the capacity of Governments and supporting organizations of persons with disabilities.

56. Much progress has been made towards the establishment of the African Disability Forum. I have held consultative meetings with potential partners, such as the University of the Western Cape in Cape Town, South Africa. One of our proposed joint projects is the biannual publication of an "African Review of Disability Law".

D. Promoting awareness-raising and implementation of the Convention on the Rights of Persons with Disabilities, the Standard Rules and other international instruments relating to disability

57. The Economic and Social Council, in resolutions 2008/20 and 2011/27, requested the Special Rapporteur on disability to raise awareness of the Convention on the Rights of Persons with Disabilities, the Standard Rules and other disability-specific instruments.

58. I continue to take every opportunity to promote the implementation and ratification of the Convention on the Rights of Persons with Disabilities, as well as other instruments that relate to persons with disabilities.

59. In June 2011, I participated in the 18th annual meeting of Special Procedures of the Human Rights Council. I met individually with other Special Rapporteurs with mandates on violence against women, extreme poverty, education and torture,

as well as with the independent expert appointed by the Secretary-General on the situation of human rights in Haiti.

60. The Human Rights Council, in resolution 17/11,[6] invited OHCHR to prepare a thematic analytical study on the issue of violence against women and girls and disability, in consultation with the Special Rapporteur on violence against women and the Special Rapporteur on disability. I met with the United Nations High Commissioner for Human Rights and the Special Rapporteur on violence against women to discuss the thematic study and the process of consultations.

61. I have had a number of consultations concerning the status of persons with disabilities in their respective countries with Government officials of Member States, including China, Finland, Norway, the Philippines, Sweden and Thailand. I am planning to consult further with the Governments of China, the Philippines and Thailand in December 2011, to continue raising awareness and promoting the implementation of the Convention on the Rights of Persons with Disabilities, the Standard Rules and other disability-specific instruments.

62. I also had specific meetings with development agencies such as the Australian Agency for International Development (AusAID), the Norwegian Agency for Development Cooperation (NORAD), the Swedish International Development Cooperation Agency (SIDA) and the United States Agency for International Development (USAID). During these meetings, I discussed support for the implementation of the Convention on the Rights of Persons with Disabilities and the Standard Rules and other disability-specific instruments, and encouraged the agencies to use the twin-track approach of promoting equality and the empowerment of persons with disabilities.

E. Collaborating with civil society

63. In my 2010 report to the Commission for Social Development, I stated my intention to work closely with and consult civil society organizations globally (E/CN.5/2011/9, para. 75).

64. During the process of consultation with civil society organizations, the overriding issue of inclusive development arose in all discussions held in the current reporting period. There were also high expectations that the proposed high-level meeting could elicit significant commitments from Governments and international development agencies for mainstreaming disability in all aspects of development.

65. I convened a Panel of Experts' meeting of representatives of organizations of persons with disabilities, which was held on 9 September 2011, the last day of the Conference of States Parties to the Convention on the Rights of Persons with Disabilities. The convening of the meeting was based on the recommendations in the Standard Rules.

66. The Panel of Experts focused its discussion on my current activities, the proposed high-level meeting of the General Assembly on disability to be held during the sixty-seventh session, priorities of the workplan of the Special Rapporteur for the next term, and the way forward on future collaboration between the Special Rapporteur and the Panel of Experts.

67. The Panel expressed its interest in participating in the planning of the proposed high-level meeting on disability and in drawing its attention to disability-inclusive development.

68. The Panel also discussed the participation of organizations of persons with disabilities in the United Nations Conference on Sustainable Development (Rio plus 20), which will be held in Rio de Janeiro, Brazil, in June 2012.

F. Vulnerable groups within the disability community

69. In my previous report to the Commission for Social Development at its forty-ninth session (E/CN.5/2011/9, paras. 55-57), I expressed my intention to focus on vulnerable groups, such as women and girls with disabilities, persons with mental disabilities, the deaf and those in situations of risk, such as humanitarian disasters.

70. In my address at the opening ceremony of the XVI World Congress of the World Federation of the Deaf in July 2011, I focused on increasing awareness of the Convention on the Rights of Persons with Disabilities among the deaf community. I also had meetings with the President of the World Federation to discuss future collaboration.

71. I met with the Pan-African Network of Users and Survivors of Psychiatry and provided them with assistance in building the capacity of their organization and strengthening their network in Africa. Later, I participated in a seminar held in Cape Town, South Africa, where the Pan-African Network met to plan its future activities.

IV. Observations and conclusions

72. An analysis of the past year demonstrates a vibrant global disability arena with very positive developments. One of the key developments was the release of the *World Report on Disability*, which states that, despite persistent attempts, including the 1 billion persons with disabilities in the mainstream development agenda remains a challenge.

73. Disability continues to be on the sidelines of the global development agenda. However, I am encouraged by activities such as the NORAD seminar in February 2011 and the side event to be organized by USAID in November 2011 at the Fourth High-level Forum on Aid Effectiveness of the Organization for Economic Cooperation and Development (OECD) in Busan, Republic of Korea. The side event will promote disability-inclusive development to a key target audience.

74. The General Assembly, in resolution 65/186 entitled "Realizing the Millennium Development Goals for persons with disabilities towards 2015 and beyond", requested the Secretary-General to submit information with a view to convening a high-level meeting on disability and development at the sixty-seventh session. I am eager to be a part of such a groundbreaking meeting. Civil society organizations are keen to participate, and I fully support their inclusion. All concerned are hopeful that the high-level meeting will result in firm commitments from Member States on disability-inclusive development.

75. In my previous report, I recommended that United Nations agencies should establish disability focal points in their organizations (E.CN.5/2011/9, para. 67 (d)).

I am pleased to see that UNICEF and UNDP have established such focal points in their respective organizations.

V. Recommendations

76. I wish to make the following recommendations:

(a) Member States should support the proposed high-level meeting of the General Assembly on disability and development during its sixty-seventh session at the highest level and commit to disability-inclusive development;

(b) Greater attention should be paid to the post-Millennium Development Goals development agenda, and the inclusion of the disability perspective in the mainstream development agenda;

(c) Disability should be an integral part of the development agenda for both donor and recipient organizations;

(d) There should be better coordination and dialogue between development agencies and organizations of persons with disabilities, to ensure greater awareness of the concerns of persons with disabilities and to share knowledge and information;

(e) Member States should support the United Nations Partnership to Promote the Rights of Persons with Disabilities: Multi-Donor Trust Fund and its objectives.

VI. Planned activities for 2012

77. I remain committed to fulfilling my mandate as the Special Rapporteur of the Commission for Social Development for monitoring the implementation of the Standard Rules on the Equalization of Opportunities for Persons with Disabilities, and to continuing as an interface in cooperating with and supporting Member States, the United Nations system and civil society. In addition to monitoring the implementation of the Standard Rules and raising awareness of those Rules and the Convention on the Rights of Persons with Disabilities, I will continue to promote greater synergy between relevant disability, development and human rights instruments.

78. I will continue to facilitate the establishment of the African Disability Forum and engage in consultations with all relevant institutions in Africa and beyond.

79. I will follow up on my first meeting with the mandate holders of the Human Rights Council and the Special Procedures Division to deepen our dialogue and enhance our working relationship, with a view to raising awareness concerning the situation of persons with disabilities and conducting joint initiatives, where possible.

80. In response to the request of the Economic and Social Council, I will actively contribute to, and participate in, the proposed high-level meeting on disability and relevant processes.